

In March 2009 the Nova Scotia Voluntary Planning Heritage Task Force made the following three (3) recommendations with regards to Nova Scotia's Underwater Cultural Heritage:

Recommendation # 41

Repeal the Treasure Trove Act immediately and amend the Special Places Protection Act to make it effective as a tool for designating and protecting Nova Scotia's underwater cultural heritage.

My suggestions for consideration are as follows:

- 1. Leave the Treasure Trove Act in place but make the following amendments;*
- 2. Amend both the Special Places Protection Act and the Treasure Trove Act to allow for a greater share of the "treasure trove" to go to the province. Rather than allowing the Museums to keep redundant artifacts in their collections without displaying them, all redundant artifacts should be awarded to the TTL holder. This will benefit the Museum by relieving it of the burden of storing and securing the material, and will benefit the TTL holder as well.*
- 3. Amend the Treasure Trove Act to allow for one person or company to hold only one or at the very most two licenses per person or per company. Some TTL holders have more licenses than they could ever work.*
- 4. Amend the Treasure Trove Act so that every shipwreck project be audited and monitored by a Department of Natural Resources and a Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage "observer" on a regular and ongoing basis to validate and verify work is actually being done as per the license terms. Make sure that work can proceed w/o the observer being on site.*
- 5. Amend the Treasure Trove Act to include a requirement that the project marine archaeologist or a qualified assistant be present underwater during all diving operations or for a specific percentage of the excavation time.*
- 6. Amend the Treasure Trove Act to include a requirement that a qualified conservator with a minimum of five years experience with materials from submerged salt-water sites be hired by the TTL holder. This will ensure all artifacts are properly conserved, documented and cataloged.*
- 7. Amend the Special Places Protection Act by mandating it to promote and celebrate the Nova Scotia Treasure Trove Act as being unique and a part of our heritage.*

8. *Amend the Special Places Protection Act by mandating the cataloging, inventorying and publishing of all documents including Provincial and Federal Government and private sector shipwreck exploration company reports on every single shipwreck project it has been involved in since its inception. Mandate that each and every document be placed in public domain and made available to researchers or private citizens, at any time (which is not the case at present). Public and tourist access to this information should be via the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic and the Nova Scotia's Museum of Natural History's website and through interactive displays.*
9. *Amend the Special Places Protection Act to mandate that all the provincial museums display and promote the artifacts and the treasure trove via exhibits, private and or corporate displays, traveling exhibits, etc. The objective being to create and promote more awareness and education to the people of Nova Scotia about their maritime heritage. Any artifacts that have been donated by Nova Scotia divers should be noted and publicly acknowledged.*

Recommendation # 42

Enable the exploration, discovery and possible recovery of underwater cultural heritage by hiring a provincial marine archaeologist and investing sufficient resources to initiate an effective underwater cultural resources management framework that includes identification, assessment, research, stakeholder relations, education, protection and monitoring, and policy development.

My suggestions for consideration are as follows:

1. *Two full time marine archaeologists need to be hired, one by the Department of Natural Resources to assist it in administrating the Treasure Trove Act and to deal with shipwreck related TTL holders. One needs to be hired by the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage to assist them in administering the Special Places Protection Act.*
2. *The selection and hiring process for both should be open to the public and done using representatives from both departments and a committee of stakeholders, recreational divers and citizens as it would be very easy for the Museum to slip in a pro- "in situ preservationist" here without public input.*

Recommendation # 43

Sponsor Nautical Archaeology Society training programs for Nova Scotia's diving community, perhaps in partnership with Parks Canada.

My suggestion for consideration is as follows:

1. *I for one would welcome NAS training, but it needs to be offered at **no cost** to local and visiting divers and it needs to be aggressively marketed and promoted by the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage through the local recreation, commercial and scientific diving industry.*